

SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, August 18, 2020, 5:30 p.m, Old Schoolhouse Common

Present: Selectboard members Richard Baker, Christopher Martin, and Laurie Colgan; Town Clerk Bobbi Brimblecombe; Listers Meg Eberhardt and Kathleen Hayes; Conservation Commission members Anne Reed and Bob Popp

At 5:30 p.m. the meeting was called to order by Chair Chris Martin

Changes or additions to the agenda: none

Public Comment: none

Review and Approval of Minutes: Approved minutes from 8/4/20

Reappraisal: The Selectboard and Listers will interview the reappraisal companies. The interviews will be conducted in executive session, based on VLCT's advice, on August 25. Rich informed the Board that he knows someone involved with one of the companies, but he doesn't feel that it is a conflict. Meg and Kate went over some of the questions that they will have for the vendors, and Kate relayed the feedback that she has received from other towns regarding these vendors.

Nature Trail: Anne Reed explained that the Conservation Commission does not feel that the cow parsnip should be eradicated from the nature trail at the Old Schoolhouse Common, because it is a native plant. They will put signs up. She noted that there is also poison ivy along the trail, and also there is invasive Japanese knotweed along the trail.

Emerald Ash Borer: Anne explained that the activity of the EAB in the Midwest does not represent the way that the insect would spread here, due to our topography. She feels that it will spread more slowly here, so the Town has time to think about this. Bob Popp explained that the state is recommending that ash trees adjacent to utilities should be taken down proactively, but ash trees that are not adjacent to utilities should be left, because there is some natural immunity to the EAB. There is state money available, but it requires a 50% match. It is not clear whether the match can be in-kind. It is also not clear how much of this work is already being done by the utility companies. The Conservation Commission has completed an inventory of roadside ash trees. The grant deadline is in early October, and if the town wants to apply, we need a draft management plan. The Conservation Commission needs to know if the town wants to proactively take down ash trees, and if so, how do you want to prioritize them – largest first, or those near heavily used areas, etc. The Selectboard agreed that the Road Crew is not equipped to take down large trees, and it needs to be done by a tree professional. Rich noted that the cost would be prohibitive to take them all down, and we could leave them to fall on their own, but they could present a safety hazard. The Board will review the report from the Conservation Commission and at a future meeting the Board will decide whether to apply for a grant and make suggestions for a management plan.

Dog complaint: The Board received a complaint regarding a dog barking for long hours on Route 2. Chris will follow up.

Sale of pickup: The new pickup will be ready next month. Chris is going to talk to the Fire Department to see if they want to keep the 2011, or whether the town should sell it. The book value is \$14 to \$16 thousand. If the Fire Department does not need it, the Board will advertise and take sealed bids. Chris will talk to the Fire Chief.

Dump truck warranties: The Board discussed the warranty choices for the new truck. They will discuss it with the Road Foreman at their next meeting.

Door for town garage: The door that was delivered for the town office was the wrong size. The supplier agreed to reduce the price by \$100 if we kept or sold it. The door will be used at the town garage.

Energy improvements: There is money available from Efficiency Vermont for the Old Schoolhouse Common. They recommended programmable thermostats and a heat pump water heater.

Thompson Road: The Board received a request to move the blocks back but they will wait until the Donna London property sale is final. When that happens, the Road Crew will put the blocks back.

Trees in New Discovery Cemetery: Laurie will look at the cemetery to see if the job is satisfactory. Bobbi reported that the tree contractor, Mike Baril, brought his boom truck to the Old Schoolhouse Common to help reinstall the flag. He donated his time for that.

Speed Enforcement: the task force does not recommend purchasing the radar speed signs. They recommend putting more money into enforcement with the Sheriffs. They also recommend looking at the speed cart to see if it is still working. They recommend setting \$2,000 aside for future expenses or for maintenance on the speed cart. The Board discussed the need for new speed limit signs on some town roads. The committee meets again in a couple of weeks.

COVID-19 update: Bobbi discussed the need for a drop box for absentee ballots for the November election. The drop box that we have is small and would only hold a few ballots. Bobbi will look into a slot for the wall.

Old Schoolhouse gym rental: The Board discussed whether or not to allow building rentals during COVID times, and whether to charge a cleaning fee. They decided to allow rentals for long time repeating classes, but not short one-time rentals. The class rental would need to clean bathrooms or pay a fee if they did not want to clean.

Errors and Omissions: The Board approved a change to the grand list to correct an error.

Appointment of Fire Wardens: The Board reappointed Tim and Tom Maclay.

Cabot Recycling Center: Chris will contact a Cabot Selectboard member to see if they wish to come to one of our meetings to discuss John Cookson's proposal for sharing the cost of the recycling center..

Expenses, Permits & Payroll: Selectboard members read and approved reports for General Expenses and Payroll, and authorized Rich to sign on behalf of the Board.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Bobbi Brimblecombe, Town Clerk

The foregoing is a true copy of the Minutes of the August 18, 2020 Selectboard Meeting.
A True Record. Attest, _____, Town Clerk
